DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 436 495 SP 038 886

TITLE Ohio's Entry Year Program for Teachers: Toward the Implementation of Performance-Based Licensure.

INSTITUTION Ohio State Dept. of Education, Columbus. Div. of Teacher, Education, Certification, and Professional Development.

PUB DATE 1999-05-00
NOTE 5p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Beginning Teacher Induction; *Beginning Teachers; Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Mentors; Preservice Teacher Education; Public Schools; *State Standards; *Teacher Certification; *Teacher Competencies; Teaching Experience; Teaching Skills
IDENTIFIERS Ohio

ABSTRACT

Ohio's new Teacher Education and Licensure Standards were adopted in 1996 and became effective in 1998. Designed to strengthen Ohio's teacher preparation programs, achieve higher standards, and intensify professional development, the standards require successful performance by beginning teachers. The standards state that the Entry Year (EY) Program will include both a formal program of support and assessment of the beginning teacher or principal. To qualify for professional licensure, all beginning teachers must successfully complete the EY program and assessment. The EY program, which lasts 1 academic year, provides direct assistance to Ohio's teachers via mentors. The Praxis III Professional Assessment for Beginning Teachers will be used as Ohio's performance assessment for licensing all beginning teachers. This booklet explains what beginning teachers, mentor teachers, and administrators need to know. It also presents resources for further information. (SM)

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Ohio Department of Education
Division of Professional Development & Licensure
May, 1999

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Ohio's Entry Year Program for Teachers:

Toward the Implementation of Performance-based Licensure

Ohio's new *Teacher Education and Licensure Standards* were adopted by the State Board of Education on October 15, 1996 and became effective on January 1, 1998. Designed to strengthen Ohio's teacher preparation programs, achieve higher standards, and intensify professional development, the new standards require successful performance on the part of beginning teachers. Section 3301-24-04 of the standards declares that "the Entry Year (EY) Program shall include both a formal program of support, including mentoring to foster professional growth of the individual, and assessment of the performance of the beginning teacher or principal." To qualify for a professional license, all beginning teachers must successfully complete the EY program and assessment.

Overview

Entry year is a vehicle for providing direct assistance to Ohio's beginning teachers via mentors, who will offer the support necessary to help them meet "real-world," full-time classroom and building challenges. While pilot EY programs have operated with state support since 1994, mandated statewide implementation of the EY program as an integral component of teacher licensure is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2002.

All beginning teachers must successfully complete an EY program before they are issued a ***professional license*** — the license needed to work as a teacher in Ohio schools. Specifically, a professional license, valid for five years, shall be issued to an individual who holds the appropriate provisional license and a baccalaureate degree; who is deemed to be of good moral character; and who has successfully completed an approved program of teacher preparation, an EY program, and the Praxis III assessment adopted by the State Board of Education.

EY Admittance Requirements

- ***A provisional teacher license*** is required by all teacher candidates for admittance to the EY program. This license, valid for two years, is issued to an individual who holds a degree required by the license, who has successfully completed an approved program of preparation, who is deemed of good moral character, who has successfully completed an examination prescribed by the State Board of Education, who has demonstrated skill in integrating educational technology in the instruction of children, who has been recommended by the dean or head of teacher education at an institution approved to prepare teachers, and who has completed, as required in Section 3319.24 of the Revised Code, a minimum of six semester hours in the teaching of reading, including at least one separate three semester hour course in the teaching of phonics, for the early childhood, middle childhood, and intervention specialist licenses.

The EY program shall be one academic year in length (i.e., a minimum of 120 school days). Teachers may attempt to complete the EY requirements no more than two times under the provisional license. Failure to successfully complete the EY requirements after the second attempt will result in the loss of the provisional license until such time as the candidate completes additional coursework, supervised field experiences, and/or clinical experiences as designated by a college or university approved for educator preparation.

The ***Praxis III Professional Assessment for Beginning Teachers***, adopted by the State Board of Education on December 15, 1998, will be used as Ohio's performance assessment for licensing all

beginning teachers. Praxis III will complement updated Praxis II "paper and pencil tests," which must be passed prior to receipt of a provisional license.

Developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), and piloted in collaboration with Ohio stakeholders, Praxis III combines elements of direct observation of classroom practice, a review and analysis of written documentation prepared by the teacher, and semi-structured interviews before and after the observed lesson. After observing a lesson or an instructional event taught by the beginning teacher, a trained Praxis III assessor evaluates the teacher's performance using 19 essential teaching criteria as part of four interrelated domains:

- Organizing content knowledge for student learning
- Creating an environment for student learning
- Teaching for student learning
- Teacher professionalism

What Do Beginning Teachers Need to Know?

- The EY program provides support to teachers in their first year of employment, helping to prepare them to pass the Praxis III assessment required for professional licensure.
- Mentor teachers use Pathwise, a companion program to Praxis III, or a similar framework to assist beginning teachers by tailoring mentoring activities in ways that strengthen particular areas of teaching practice.
- The Praxis III assessment does not replace Praxis II paper and pencil tests. Praxis II tests must be passed before a provisional license is issued — a requirement for admittance to the EY program.
- Praxis III will be administered to beginning teachers two times — once in the fall and once in the spring — during their EY experience. Beginning teachers are scored on the 19 essential elements of teaching that comprise the Praxis III assessment. Trained Praxis III assessors conduct these assessments, producing "records of evidence" following each observation.

What Do Mentor Teachers Need to Know?

- Experienced teachers serve as mentors to beginning teachers and state-trained assessors evaluate the beginning teacher's performance in the classroom.
- Serving as a mentor teacher could be incorporated into the mentor teacher's individual professional development plan (IPDP) and approved by his/her local professional development committee (LPDC) as an activity that counts toward licensure renewal.
- Mentor teachers work continuously with EY teachers to enhance their professional growth and understanding of the planning, preparation, and presentation of various learning activities, and the variety of ways to assess such activities.
- Mentor teachers receive training in how to support and guide beginning teachers through the use of a system such as *Pathwise*. Like Praxis III, the Pathwise Observation System was developed by the Educational Testing Service to serve as a framework whereby mentor teachers could provide feedback and prepare the EY teacher for a performance assessment.
- Praxis III assessors are trained objective observers who score the EY teacher's performance using a scoring rubric. Assessors are selected and trained at the state level. Unlike mentors, assessors do not provide feedback to the teacher during the observation. A written summary based on the record of evidence is sent to the EY teacher following the observation.
- Regional support/networking activities for mentor teachers are provided through the regional professional development centers (RPDCs).

What Do Administrators Need to Know?

- If possible, mentor teachers should teach the same grade level or subject area and be in the same school building as the EY teacher.
- It is recommended that mentor teachers be assigned to no more than one EY teacher, and that the mentor not be involved in hiring decisions.
- The EY program does not replace employment evaluation; EY assessment is used exclusively for licensure determination.
- School districts are encouraged to link the EY program to their continuous improvement plans.
- School districts are encouraged to establish strong connections with area teacher preparation programs and regional providers such as RPDCs, special education regional resource centers (SERRCs), and educational service centers (ESCs) to facilitate mentor and EY teacher professional development activities.
- Praxis III assessments will not be required of experienced teachers; however, school districts may choose to use the Pathwise system to address the professional development needs of experienced teachers.

Resources

Regional and area service providers — such as regional professional development centers (RPDCs), special education regional resource centers (SERRCs), educational service centers (ESCs), and institutions of higher education (IHEs) — are available throughout the state to assist school districts and individual educators in meeting their personnel and professional development needs.

For additional information about Ohio's Entry Year (EY) program, contact the Ohio Department of Education EY team at 614/466-2761. Additional information about Pathwise and Praxis III, as well as Ohio's new *Teacher Education and Licensure Standards*, can also be obtained by accessing the following Ohio Department of Education web site addresses:

- **http://www.ode.ohio.gov/www/ tc/pathprax.html**
- **http://www.ode.ohio.gov/www/tc/licensure.html**

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